

# House Passes Plan to Strengthen Teacher Preparation

*Senate Bill 51, raising the bar on educator prep, now heads to Governor's desk*

Dover, DE – An educator preparation plan, pledged by the Governor in his [2013 State of the State](#) passed the Delaware House today and now heads to the Governor's desk for signature. [Senate Bill 51](#) strengthens licensure requirements for prospective teachers while improving teaching training and better tracking data on teacher preparation programs.

The bill raises the bar for entering the teaching profession, with program entry requirements and required content exams and performance assessments before licensure; improves teacher training with high-quality, student teaching experiences, and better tracks data on preparation programs, with required reporting of program effectiveness.

"I want to thank our lawmakers for recognizing we need new teachers to be prepared to make a difference on their first day in the classroom. The single most important school factor in a child's academic success is teacher quality," said Governor Markell. "We want to attract the best candidates into the teaching profession because our state's success in the future is dependent on how well we educate our children today. Delaware students deserve high quality teachers who will challenge them to reach their full potential every day. "

"Today, the House of Representatives reaffirmed our commitment to our children by ensuring that we have the very best teachers in our classrooms," said Rep. Darryl Scott, D-Dover. "Teacher quality is critical to a child's academic success,

and this bill will better prepare teachers to be successful on day one in the classroom.”

“I appreciate the support of the General Assembly in ensuring that new teachers entering our children’s classrooms are prepared as well as possible to meet the education and growth needs of the students they’ll be teaching,” said Mark Murphy, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Education. “The Department looks forward to continued collaboration with all of the stakeholders that have engaged with us on this initiative.”

“This is another step in making sure that we have the best-qualified teachers available working with our students,” said Senator David Sokola, D-Newark, the bill’s prime sponsor.

“The other big thing this will do is help us develop data so we can learn the most effective ways to prepare teachers and put those lessons to work for our future teachers and their students.”

“Standards for the profession should be established and maintained by members of the profession and comprehensive, in-depth, up-to-date, real world preparation programs should include contributions from skilled members of the profession,” said Frederika Jenner, President of the [Delaware State Education Association](#) (DSEA). “Strengthening teacher preparation goes hand-in-hand with adequate, meaningful support for new teachers; dedicated recruitment of minority candidates; upgrading starting salaries, and creating career advancement opportunities that keep teachers involved in teaching.”

When the bill was introduced, John Sell, Delaware’s Teacher of the year for 2013 said, “Governor Markell’s focus on improving educator preparation is much needed and it illustrates how Delaware is committed to providing the absolute best teachers for our students. The teaching profession has changed dramatically in the 21st century, and it requires specialized

skills covering a wide variety of areas. Ensuring our teachers enter the profession armed with those skills should be a key focus so that our students can receive the very best education possible. Preparing and retaining highly qualified teachers in Delaware needs to be a central focus if we aim to make our schools national models of excellence.”

The bill passed the Delaware Senate on May 2, 2013. The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2014.

Research shows:

- **The top education systems recruit and retain top educators:** Only 23% of U.S. teachers come from the top third of college graduates compared to 100% in Singapore, Finland & Korea.
- **A significant portion of Delaware teachers are new to the profession, and the majority of those teachers were educated in Delaware:** 1 in 4 teachers employed in Delaware public schools have 5 or fewer years of education experience. Of those teachers, 59% received their bachelor’s degrees in Delaware.
- **New teacher turnover is significant, and state efforts to improve educator preparation lag the nation:** 2 in 5 new teachers leave teaching in Delaware within 4 years. The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has consistently given Delaware a “D-” for “improving teacher preparation,” placing Delaware in the bottom 8 states nationwide for addressing this issue.

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